



MILTON / MILTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT FIRE EMS SERVICES ANALYSIS

CHAPTER 2 – OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Operational Overview and Recommendations

As stated earlier, the objectives of this project were to evaluate the Milton/Milton Township Fire Department (Department) and make recommendations for the Department's short/long term organizational and administrative needs. The Analysis includes findings and recommendations relating to the Governance and Administration, Assessment and Planning, Goals and Objectives, Financial Resources, Programs, Physical Resources, Human Resources, Essential Resources, Training, and External System Relations of the Fire Department. This section evaluates the Department's present Fire/EMS organizational and administrative needs, and makes recommendations relating to the categories listed above. This review was based on the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE), formerly the Commission of Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) categories and criteria.

The Milton/Milton Township Fire Department overall is doing a very good job of maintaining high standards in providing fire and emergency medical services. Department personnel displayed professionalism and were very cooperative throughout the review.

Governance and Administration

Findings

The Milton/Milton Township Fire Department is an organization established by an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Town and City of Milton. The governing authority according to the agreement is the Milton and Milton Township Fire Commission. The Commission Members are governed by Commission By-laws. All Department assets and liabilities are shared equally by both municipalities. There are communication concerns between the Department, Commission, Town Board, City Council and City Administrator. The Fire Chief provides guidance to the Commission in; policy making, planning, compliance with legal requirements, and the department's vision and mission. The City Finance Department provides assistance with payroll, invoices and payments. RW Management has concluded that at times there seems to be inconsistency in communications and miscommunications between the Township Board, City administration and the Department administration when conducting business.

Furthermore, in reviewing Chapters 60 and 62 of the State Statutes, the establishment of the Fire Department does not appear to meet State Statutes. The responsibilities of a Police and Fire Commission (PFC) are limited to the authority granted to the commission by Chapter 62.13 of the Wisconsin State Statutes. The PFC does not have "optional powers" granted by the electors. Statute 62.13 also describes the number of allowed commissioners, description of who is allowed to be a commissioner and how they are appointed.

The Milton Area Emergency Services Association, Inc. is a non-stock, non-profit State of Wisconsin Corporation. This Corporation's By-laws contain mandatory dues, termination standards, 18 month probationary period, cash retirement gifts and dress uniform purchases.



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Recommendations

- The Town and City should receive legal guidance regarding the formation of the Fire Department and the oversight or governance of the Department. The Department has the appearance of a Fire Protection District. A fire protection district is a nonprofit municipal corporation or inter-governmental entity formed for the mutual benefit of providing fire protection and associated services to each governmental entity involved. Generally, the governing body of the fire district is a board or commission consisting of representatives of each municipal entity under the jurisdiction of the fire district. The main advantage of a fire district is administrative representation and financial equity, based upon a predetermined factor. The fire protection district board develops a budget for district operations, which is then procured through tax levy by each municipal entity in the district. The fire district should be supported by an Agreement signed by all member municipal entities and registered or recorded with the Secretary of State. In some cases a municipality, (city or village) may be required to adopt a municipal ordinance to compliment the Agreement. Chapter 66.0301 and 66.03125 (Mutual Assistance) may be used for guidance. There is no statutory reference to “Fire Districts” in Wisconsin.

RW recommends that the establishment of the Department needs to be completed in a legal manner. The authority of the Chief, the Oversight Board, the City Council, the Town Board and the private corporation are all open to concerns relating to civil liability until this is legally determined. The Commission is not covered by State Statutes or Town or Village Ordinances, the Chief was sworn in by the City, and there does not appear to be any ordinances or resolutions creating the Department.

- Establish a more structured communications process between the Town Board, City Administrator, City Council, Commission and the Fire Department that utilizes written reports, regular meetings between the Administrator and Chief, and meetings with the Town Clerk or President as needed. This can be accomplished once the governance of the Department is more clearly defined.
- The Milton Area Emergency Services Association, Inc. by-laws need to be revised. The way the governance and by-laws are currently set up, the independent corporation has By-laws that contain Human Resource functions within the Department and provide personnel policies for the Department. These conflict with the Department Standard Operating Guidelines.

Assessment and Planning

RW reviewed area characteristics, fire and non-fire risk assessments and response strategies, and planning within the Department. The following findings and recommendations are based on planning concerns and risk management criteria that will impact outcomes and provide for the basic needs to complete the mission of the Department.



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Findings

The Department is considered a combination department with a total of two part time positions and fifty-two paid on premise positions. The coverage area includes the City of Milton, the Town of Milton and portions of Harmony, Johnston, Lima and Koshkonong Townships. Approximately 90 square miles with an estimated population of 11,523. The Department responded to a total of 1205 incidents in 2014, with 446 of those being fire related and 759 for emergency medical service (EMS).

The department has approximately 54 part time or paid on premise members which include the Chief, 2 Deputy Chiefs, administrative assistant, 3 Captains, and 3 Lieutenants. The Chief plans to present a new organizational plan to the Commission this month.

The geographic boundaries of the coverage district are established. The Town and City use the appropriate codes, statutes and regulations in their planning process. Water and fire protection systems are reviewed in the planning process.

The Department's current Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO) rating is a 4 in the hydrant areas of the district and 8b in the non-hydrant coverage areas. This review took place in 2014. The rating schedule measures the major elements of a Department's fire suppression system. These measurements then are developed into a Public Protection Classification number on a relative scale from 1 to 10, with 10 representing less than the minimum recognized protection. The schedule is a fire insurance rating tool used to determine property insurance premiums that property owners pay to their insurance carrier.

The Department does not have a "standard of cover" for emergency deployment, which outlines response time, pumping capacity and apparatus and equipment deployment objectives. A formal risk assessment has not been completed.

The water supply system is adequate for the City, and is utilized in the planning effort as it relates to development. The department has tenders and relies on mutual aid for water tenders when fighting fires in the Townships.

The Department does have a long-range strategic plan, which includes stations, vehicles and personnel for the next five (5) to (10) years in the development. This analysis will help provide the basis for the long range strategic plan. The City does have a strategic plan in place.

There are no current annexation issues or concerns with neighboring communities.

Recommendations

- RW recommends that the Fire Chief position be changed to a full time position and that the Assistant or Deputy Chief positions are changed to three full time shift commander positions. There is currently a minimum staffing of 4 personnel covering from 6:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. and 5 personnel from 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. The personnel are staffed in 12 hour blocks. There is a need to maintain supervision throughout the entire 24 hour period and that could be accomplished with 3 full time 24 hour shift commanders.



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- The Township's growth plan and the current incident response statistics show no need for improved station coverage, but there is potential to work with the City of Janesville as they look to locate a station near the southern edge of Milton's district. Specific recommendations in these areas are covered in the Physical Resources section, of this chapter.
- A fire risk assessment and response strategy listing the nature and magnitude of the hazards within the City and Townships should be completed. The fire risks in each planning zone, including required fire protection resources and special, routine and isolated hazards need to be identified (pre-plans) so an accurate "standard of cover" strategy can be established. The risk assessment and the recommendations and implementation plan in this report will provide the basis for a comprehensive strategic plan.
- In conjunction with the Town and the City, a long range strategic plan should be developed for the Fire Department.

Goals and Objectives

RW performed an evaluation of the Department's goals and objectives, and has made recommendations for future documentation.

Findings

The Town and City do not have written goals and objectives for the fire department. The Fire Department has written goals and objectives that are in the budget document. This is not seen by the fire department members and there is an unclear process in place to meet these goals and objectives.

The Department's management process is unclear at times, and the fire department organizational structure is confusing at times. For example, with a part-time Chief and part time Deputy Chief Positions, some of the Department members don't know who to report to when seeking information and guidance.

Standard operating guidelines were recently completed by the Chief and approved by the Commission. Department members have not been trained in these guidelines yet.

Recommendations

- RW Management recommends the Department meet with the Town and the City to further define and develop formal written goals and objectives. This can be accomplished by the development of a committee representing the Department, City and Town administration, and governing body in the development of the mission statement, goals and objectives. Once completed, everyone on the Department needs to be familiar with the mission of their fire department and how the Department is going to achieve its goals.



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- Fire department needs to update and re-enforce department goals and objectives with members through a required learning/training program to ensure consistency and compliancy with all Department policies.
- Town, City and Department goals and objectives should be reviewed annually by the Chief and City and Town administration, with any changes necessary brought to the attention of the Town Board and City Council.
- The Department should identify and develop an updated management process (chain of command) that will be responsible for implementing the Town, City and Department's goals and objectives. This can be accomplished by developing a committee of Town, City and fire representatives who through a plan will develop, teach, and ensure that all department employees have a very clear understanding of the chain of command.
- A determination needs to be made on whether the Town, City or Commission have responsibility to determine department organizational structure and reporting responsibility. These relationships should be clarified in the respective municipal codes.

Financial Resources

RW reviewed how the Department handles financial issues.

Findings

The Fire Chief develops the budget with some input and recommendations from the officers and firefighters. The budget then goes to the Commission for review and approval. The approved Commission budget then goes to the Town Board and the City Council for adoption and placement on the tax levy.

Financial reports are provided to the Chief by the Finance Director who reviews them on a consistent basis. Independent audit of the Fire Department finances are not being conducted annually.

The Fire Chief reviews invoices for expenses incurred by the Department on a monthly basis and submits them to the City finance department for processing and payment. There have been concerns related to invoices, vouchers, account overruns and timely payments.

Within the Milton/Milton Township Fire Department is a not-for-profit 501c3 Fire Association that conducts annual fund raising efforts. The funds are used to support the fire department and buy equipment that is not funded by the Town and City tax levy. The Association operates independently from the Town and the City and does not provide any accounting of revenues and expenses to the City or Town. Fundraising is not covered by Town or City policy when using the Department's name and resources.



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Recommendations

- RW recommends that independent financial audits of the Fire Department finances should be included in the annual City audit. Any audit deficiencies should be implemented in the Department. The Department should utilize current financial principals and GAAP.
- The Town, City and Milton Area Emergency Services Association, Inc. should establish fund raising policies and procedures for the Fire Association to follow when fund raising efforts are conducted utilizing the Department's name and resources. These funds should also be subject to independent financial audits and public disclosure.
- The Chief should include officers and line personnel in the budget process, and use it as an opportunity to develop future Chief Officers. An example would be to ask all department employees to submit their own budget requests (wish lists) for the upcoming year, and then organize a Department summit to prioritize the requests.

Programs

This area is defined as the services, activities and responses provided by the department for the communities served, and supported by the mission, goals and objectives of the Milton/Milton Township Fire Department.

Findings

Fire Suppression

The fire suppression performed by the Department is supported by 2 Engines, 1 Quint, 2 Ambulances, 1 Grass Truck, 2 Tenders, 1 Water Rescue, 2 Utility Pickups, 1 Inflatable Boat, 1 ATV, 1 MCI Decon Trailer and 1 Command Vehicle. All responding personnel are familiar with the Incident Command System (ICS), and work well with their MABAS¹ neighbors. All Department Officers are currently receiving the premier command Blue Card training.

Fire Prevention

The department provides the City and Township, in their coverage area, adequate fire prevention and code enforcement programs that totaled 656 inspections in 2015. There is currently no automated process in place for inspection records. Re-inspections are not always being completed and more training is needed. The re-inspection issue was addressed during this analysis and has been corrected.

¹ Mutual Aid Box Alarm System



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Public Education

The Department has a school education program in place. They provide fire extinguisher training, utilize the Survive Alive House, provide CPR training and have an open house during fire prevention week.

Currently there is no written public education program, which includes an effectiveness analysis of their public education program.

Fire Investigations

The Department does currently investigate fire cause and origin, and provides fire investigation services for all fires. Most investigations are completed internally but the Department does not have the related training or certification they should have.

Rock County had an investigation team in the past, but it was disbanded. The State Department of Criminal Investigation (DCI) and Fire Marshall are called in when necessary.

Technical Rescue

The department does provide some Technical Rescue (extrication and water and ice rescue) training, but other services such as elevated rescue, dive, confined space, and Trench Rescue are provided by external resources.

Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials services are provided by the department up to the operational level. There are several trained technicians on the Department, who are on the Rock County Team. Level B team is provided by Rock County and a Level A team is provided by Madison. This is a practical approach to hazardous materials for a department this size.

Emergency Medical Services

The department provides basic emergency medical services up to EMT-Advanced service level available, with paramedic service available from Janesville and Fort Atkinson Hospital.

An Advanced Life Support – Paramedic feasibility study was recently completed recommending that the Department provide ALS service.

Emergency / Disaster Management

There is a City Emergency Operations Plan in place. This plan designates the City Administrator as the Emergency Management Director for the City.

There is also a Rock County Emergency Operations Plan and Emergency Operations Center located in Janesville.



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There has been limited disaster training and planning for the Department, City and Townships.

Recommendations

- The Fire Department should conduct periodic appraisals for all programs to ensure consistency and compliance with the department's mission.
- Train at least 2 -3 personnel as certified fire investigators and develop a fire investigation program, which includes the ability to investigate all fires as to cause and origin.
- The Department should continue to train on NIMS, MABAS incidents, and EOC, with defined role and responsibilities of internal officers and surrounding departments. All personnel should be trained to the ICS 200 level and officers to the ICS 400 level. All personnel should be familiar with the Emergency Operations Plan of the City and the County.
- RW recommends that the Fire Chief be designated as the Emergency Management Director for the City and Town.
- Establish written fire inspection and public education programs.
- Develop a written paramedic implementation plan for the Town and City approval.

Physical Resources

This section evaluates the Department's fixed facility, apparatus and maintenance and related personnel needs.

Findings

The Department operates 1 fire station which was built in 1976. The facility is maintained and managed to meet the agency's mission. The design of the facility is not conducive to staffing personnel on premise. The station location is adequate for the Department's coverage area. The current location allows for easy access and response for the majority of department personnel and acceptable apparatus response to incidents. This is confirmed by a study completed in 2011. The station needs to be replaced and there has been conflicting information relating to when this will occur.

The ideal standards of coverage for fire and emergency medical responses are 4-6 minutes from the time that the call is dispatched until the unit arrives on the scene. This standard is consistent with the standards of the following agencies;

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)



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- American Heart Association Guidelines for Defibrillation and CPR
- National Standard of Care for EMS Response
- Journal of American Medical Association
- Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS)
- American Ambulance Association (AAA)

These established national standards for response have proven to be valid and will be utilized in legal cases as being the benchmark to which services will be judged. The Department generally meets these standards with the current station location, and current staffing levels.

The apparatus are fully equipped for structural firefighting, water supply is adequate for most areas, emergency medical response times are good, extrication and rescue meet standards. The vehicles are checked on a regular basis and have adequate daily maintenance provisions. The current Department apparatus are well designed and meet the Department's goals and objectives.

The Department has outsourced certified vehicle maintenance service and emergency repair for all apparatus. A schedule is established and appears to meet the need for service and reliability of emergency apparatus. The Department equipment resources were adequate and well maintained. There was regular preventive maintenance and repairs on the equipment and an inventory control system was in place.

There is a capital Improvement program set up which outlines the replacement schedule for the apparatus, although the station maintenance or replacement is not part of that plan.

Recommendations

- RW recommends that the Town, City and Fire Department jointly develop a physical resource implementation plan for the new station. This will assure that all interested parties are part of the planning process and moving in the same direction.

Human Resources

RW reviewed the development and utilization of human resources for the Department. The Department's organizational chart, Department policies and standard operating guidelines were examined to provide a basis for the completion of this section.

Findings

There is currently no designated personnel manager for the Fire Department.

There are current job descriptions for all personnel are in place. The Department recently implemented new standard operating guidelines. There were limited human resource policies in place.



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Selection, discipline, and promotion policies are in place. Currently the Commission holds the responsibility for these areas with the Fire Chief providing input.

The Department does have a written new member orientation program. The probationary period is listed in the Association by-laws, the Department Standard Operating Guidelines and job descriptions.

The City has a written Employee Handbook in place, but the Department does not follow this handbook.

A written physical/fitness program is not in place at this time or career development plan in place.

The Department does not have a written risk management program in place.

The Department does not conduct exit interviews when members of the department resign.

Recommendations

- RW recommends that the Fire Chief be designated as the personnel manager for the Department. The Chief should receive Human Resource training. All personnel issues should be coordinated with the City and Town Administration. This will provide the Fire Chief with someone who has human resource knowledge and ability.
- RW also recommends that the Department develop a career development program and a written health and fitness program for the Department. Mandatory physicals should be part of the health and fitness program.
- Establish recruitment, retention, and promotional process committee.
- The Department should develop a Health and Safety Committee, and begin putting together a risk management and safety program for the Department.
- Develop a written risk management process that will provide the City and Town with an analysis of community risk using real world factors. The risk assessment will include determining and defining the differences in risk between single family, multiple family, and commercial dwellings within the coverage area.
- Provide human resource training and review SOGs with all members.
- Solicit constructive feedback by performing exit interviews with personnel who leave the Department.

Essential Resources

RW interviews and document review provided a basis for the completion of this section.



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Findings

The water supply in most of the coverage area is covered by a hydrant system, which is adequate. Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) provides for Tender coverage from other departments for the areas that do not have hydrants.

A county wide VHF Communications system is in place and dispatch is provided by a county wide dispatch center. This system provides interoperability with mutual aid departments. The Communication Center does have adequate communication standard operating guidelines in place.

The management information system does support the current needs of the Department. There is limited administrative support and resources available to the Department. The Department server will no longer be supported at the end of July and needs to be replaced. The Department is currently using Firehouse software and has been researching moving over to Imagetrend software. Imagetrend is the State EMS software that the Department interfaces with for EMS records. Currently EMS reports are scanned and sent to the billing company to process.

There is a part time administrative assistant in place.

Recommendations

- RW recommends that the Department replace the Department server with a current version of server software that will be supported.
- Adopt a records management information system that supports all departmental needs. Complete the research on the differences between Firehouse and Imagetrend software and determine which will provide the best overall programming for the entire department.

External Resources

Findings

Rock County has a county wide VHF conventional radio system and mobile data system in place. This radio system is narrow banded and compliant with FCC regulations. The mobile data system is underutilized by the Department.

Recommendations

- There are no additional recommendations in this section.



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Training

Training supports safety and is the backbone for all fire departments when it comes to providing services to their communities in a safe and efficient manner.

Findings

The department has a training schedule.

No performance-based measurements are in place, although NFPA core competencies are followed. EMS core competencies are written out.

The Department is utilizing Fire House software for training records.

The Department's training facilities and facilities that they have access to are very limited. A hose/training tower is part of the plans for the new station.

Recommendations

- The Fire Department should develop a written departmental training program with a twelve month calendar of events. This plan should include needs and skill analysis, core competencies, certification and recertification requirements, training methodology, testing and evaluations, resources and facilities and schedule. This will allow for all department members to plan for and attend training on a regular basis.
- Identify training needs as they pertain to current and potential future risks.
- Expand training with MABAS partners by setting up mock incidents and worse-case scenarios, to better prepare the members for incident types that are low frequency and high risk. Some examples would be; tornado drill, high school shooting, hazmat incident, etc.

External System Relations

This section of the report covers external department relations for fire, EMS and police coverage and their effect on the station and staffing needs of the Department.

Findings

The Department does not have a strategic plan in place that would also address the external relationships and potential for changes in those relationships based on population, economic factors, and county-wide rescue emergency planning efforts.

The MABAS agreement and related auto-aid agreements, box cards and standard operating guidelines are functioning well.



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There are no current consolidation discussions

Recommendations

- RW recommends that the Milton/Milton Township Fire Department develop a Strategic Plan, which includes how external resources are utilized.
- Research potential for consolidations and potential joint staffing of a future Janesville fire station.
- Discuss potential for increased training with external departments including the Milton Police Department and Rock County Sheriff's Department.